

## **DEMENTIA FACT SHEET**

### **What is Dementia?**

Dementia is the progressive loss of brain power. There are many kinds of dementia but the most common is Alzheimer's disease.

Dementia mostly describes the symptoms that occur when the brain is affected by certain diseases and/or conditions.

It is also possible to have more than one type of dementia; i.e. Alzheimer's disease and Vascular Dementia. All these diseases have one thing in common: they damage and destroy brain cells, so that the brain cannot function as well as it ought to.

### **Symptoms**

- A loss of short-term memory to begin with, eventually the long-term memory will also be affected
- Unable to concentrate
- Personality changes
- Depression including Mood changes
- Loss of a sense of time and place
- Difficulty in communication and language
- Problems with daily tasks, such as personal hygiene and eating
- Perceptual (vision) difficulties
- Reasoning and Judgement
- Inability to focus and pay attention
- Individuals with dementia may eventually need full-time nursing care

Dementia is not part of the normal ageing process. Dementia is known as an 'umbrella term' for the hundreds of diseases which stem from it. There are various causes for the disease but the effects are all similar. There is no cure at present, however research into treatment and prevention continues world-wide.

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